

11, 1999 at 2 p.m. to hold a hearing in room 2141 of the Rayburn House Office Building, on "Bankruptcy Reform."

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

STRATEGIC SUBCOMMITTEE

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Strategic Subcommittee of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet on Thursday, March 11, 1999 at 10 a.m. in open session, to receive testimony on ballistic missile defense programs and management, in review of the defense authorization request for fiscal year 2000 and the future years defense program.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

SUBCOMMITTEE ON PERSONNEL

Mr. GORTON. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Subcommittee on Personnel of the Committee on Armed Services be authorized to meet on Thursday, March 11, 1999, at 2 p.m. in open session, to receive testimony on the defense health program in review of the defense authorization request for fiscal year 2000 and the future years defense program.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

RESTORATION OF LITHUANIA'S INDEPENDENCE

• Mr. ABRAHAM. Mr. President, I rise to mark the ninth anniversary of the restoration of Lithuania's independence. I also rise to pay tribute to the Lithuanian people for their perseverance and sacrifice, which enabled them to achieve the freedom they now enjoy.

On March 11, 1990, the newly elected Lithuanian Parliament, fulfilling its electoral mandate from the people of Lithuania, declared the restoration of Lithuania's independence and the establishment of a democratic state. This marked a great moment for Lithuania and for lovers of freedom around the globe.

The people of Lithuania endured a 51-year foreign occupation. Resulting from the infamous Hitler-Stalin Pact of 1939, this Soviet occupation brought with it communist dictatorship and cultural genocide. But the Lithuanian people were not defeated. They resisted their oppressors and kept their culture, their faith and their dream of independence very much alive even during the hardest times.

The people of Lithuania were even able to mobilize and sustain a non-violent movement for social and political change, a movement which came to be known as Sajudis. This people's movement helped guarantee a peaceful transition to independence through full participation in democratic elections on February 24, 1990.

Unfortunately, the peace did not last. In January 1991, ten months after res-

toration of independence, the people and government of Lithuania faced a bloody assault by foreign troops intent on overthrowing their democratic institutions. Lithuanians withstood this assault, maintaining their independence and their democracy. Their successful use of non-violent resistance to an oppressive regime is an inspiration to all.

On September 17, 1991, Lithuania became a member of the United Nations and is a signatory to a number of its organizations and other international agreements. It also is a member of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the North Atlantic Cooperation Council and the Council of Europe. Lithuania is an associate member of the European Union, has applied for NATO membership and is currently negotiating for membership in the WTO, OECD and other Western organizations.

The United States established diplomatic relations with Lithuania on July 28, 1992. But our nation never really broke with the government and people of Lithuania. The U.S. never recognized the forcible incorporation of Lithuania into the U.S.S.R., and views the present Government of Lithuania as a legal continuation of the inter-war republic. Indeed, for over fifty years the United States maintained a bipartisan consensus that our nation would refuse to recognize the forcible incorporation of Lithuania into the former Soviet Union.

Our relations with Lithuania are strong, friendly and mutually beneficial. Lithuania has enjoyed Most-Favored-Nation (MFN) treatment with the U.S. since December, 1991. Through 1996, the U.S. has committed over \$100 million to Lithuania's economic and political transformation and to address humanitarian needs. In 1994, the U.S. and Lithuania signed an agreement of bilateral trade and intellectual property protection, and in 1997 a bilateral investment treaty.

In 1998 the U.S. and Lithuania signed The Baltic Charter Partnership. That charter recalls the history of American relations with the area and underscores our "real, profound, and enduring" interest in the security and independence of the three Baltic states. As the Charter also notes, our interest in a Europe whole and free will not be ensured until Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are secure.

Mr. President, I commend the people of Lithuania for their courage and perseverance in using peaceful means to regain their independence. I pledge to work with my colleagues to continue working to secure the freedom and independence of Lithuania and its Baltic neighbors, and I join with the people of Lithuania as they celebrate their independence. •

TRIBUTE TO ROBERT CONDON

• Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I rise to pay tribute to Robert Condon, one of

our nation's leading child literacy advocates, who died last month, tragically, at the all-too-young age of 40. I ask my colleagues to join me in sending condolences to the Condon family.

Robert Condon was a successful businessman, but his true passion was reading. Throughout the 1980s, he took time from his career and family to read to children at local homeless shelters. He understood, far before many Americans did, that reading aloud to children is one of the most effective ways to teach literacy and improve young people's lives.

In 1991, Robert Condon quit his regular job in order to work full time promoting youth literacy. He founded the non-profit organization "Rolling Readers USA," where he and a small cadre of volunteers read to children in public housing developments, homeless shelters, and schools in the San Diego area.

Robert Condon's passion was contagious and Rolling Readers grew exponentially. Today, it has 40,000 volunteers reading to children in 24 states. Rolling Readers has won acclaim from national organizations, including the International Reading Association and Reading Is Fundamental.

In his short life, Robert Condon touched the lives of hundreds of thousands of children. In his memory, Rolling Readers USA is sponsoring March 27 as a national read-in day, when tens of thousands of volunteers will spend part of their day reading to children, keeping Robert Condon's ideals moving forward.

Mr. President, I encourage all Americans to participate in Rolling Readers USA's national read-in day and to become involved throughout the year to promote youth literacy. Volunteering our time and energy makes a difference and is a fitting way to pay tribute to this remarkable Californian. •

REMARKS BY BETH MACY HONORING SENATOR CLAIBORNE PELL

• Mr. JEFFORDS. Mr. President, I submit for the RECORD the following remarks made by Ms. Beth Macy at an event honoring Senator Claiborne Pell, hosted by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU). Ms. Macy, a former Pell Grant recipient, spoke eloquently about the positive difference that the Pell grant made in her life and the difference it has made in the lives of the students she now teaches. Senator Pell, a statesman committed to education, was visionary in his creation of the grant that now bears his name. The Pell Grant still serves as the very foundation of our federal commitment to postsecondary study and it has helped make the dream of higher education a reality for millions of low-income individuals. I was pleased and honored to participate in this event for Senator Pell.

I urge my colleagues to take the time to read Ms. Macy's remarks. They remind us of why our support for the Pell grant program is important.